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# Healing Hearts in Karamoja: A Mission of Hope

Neither the scorching sun nor the vast distances could dampen the passion to serve. In a profound display of dedication to the underserved, the Mbarara University of Science and Technology (MUST) Department of Surgery, in partnership with the Ministry of Health and a consortium of international and national health organizations, conducted a 7-Day Paediatric Surgical Camp.

This initiative channels specialized medical expertise directly to the children of the Karamoja Sub-Region and surrounding areas. For many families, these seven days represent more than just medical care; they represent a life-changing opportunity and a future restored.

HOLY GATE OF GOD'S MERCY
BLESSED BY RT. REV. BISHOP DAMIANO GUZZETTI
11th FEBRUARY 2016 – DAY OF THE SICK
"RECEIVE GOD'S MERCY AND HEALING WHEN YOU ENTER OUR HOSPITAL"
MERCIFUL LIKE THE FATHER

Small Acts, Big Transformation “Small acts, when multiplied by millions of people, can transform the world.” Mr. Besigye Ambrose, Administrator & Human Resource Manager at BethanyKids, noted that the mission is fueled by a unique synergy of local and

international partners, each committed to delivering healthcare to the “least reached.” We extend our deepest gratitude to the organizations making this possible:

- Ministry of Health, Uganda
- Mbarara University of Science & Technology (MUST)
- Amigos Internacionales
- Doctors on Mission International
- Bethany Kids
- Mwagale Foundation
- Southern Baptist Missionaries

Mr. Besigye Ambrose,Leading the team

Dr. Ssembusi John

Dr. Deus Kateregga

Through this collective effort, we are not just performing surgeries; we are restoring hope and health to the next generation. Mr. Besigye expressed deep appreciation for the team's selflessness in serving the disadvantaged.

Voices from the Field: "Our work is lighter and our hearts are full." Dr. Ssembusi John, General Surgeon at Matany Hospital, welcomed the visiting team with gratitude, highlighting the life-changing cases ready for surgery. He thanked his colleagues for the journey and the full sponsorship, noting how much their expertise empowers the local team.

"Hope restoration is at the heart of our mission." Dr. Deus Kateregga, Director of St. Kizito Hospital Matany, welcomed the surgical team with deep gratitude for supporting families who cannot afford care. Following an orientation and a tour of the facility, the mission to save a generation is officially underway.

The team is handling two primary surgical domains to address a range of congenital and acquired conditions:

1. Paediatric General Surgery: Hernias in children, Undescended testis, Hirschsprung's disease, Anorectal malformations, Soft tissue masses, Hypospadias

2. Paediatric ENT & Plastic Surgery, Adenotonsillectomy, Cleft Lip & Cleft Palate repair, Excisions and Mass removals.

Behind every successful surgery is the steady hand of the anaesthesia team. Kudos to the anaesthesiologists and anaesthetists at the camp! Their expertise ensures every child remains safe, comfortable, and pain-free. They are the unsung heroes of the theater.

Mentorship: Building a Sustainable Tomorrow: One of the most significant impacts was the focus on a “legacy of care.” The operating theaters served as classrooms where seasoned surgeons including Dr. Martin Tungotyo, Dr. Timothy Mujyanama, Dr. Hani Bilal, Dr. Danel Kisitu, Dr. Brian Agaba (ENT), Dr. Tommy Wobudubire, Dr. Eden and more mentored the next generation of Ugandan doctors. By allowing mentees to observe and assist in complex procedures, the camp strengthened local surgical capacity, ensuring that expertise remains in the region long after the mission concludes.

Restoring health and hope in Karamoja: Dr. Albert Muhumuza, working alongside paediatric surgeon Dr. Eden, performs a successful herniotomy on a 2-year-old who had endured the condition for half his life. Precision, partnership, and passion in every procedure.

“Every breath is a gift.” Dr. Brian Agaba, an ENT surgeon volunteering with Amigos International, is bringing specialized care to the youngest patients. He is currently performing an adenotonsillectomy on a 14-month-old boy, ensuring a future of clear breathing and better health for this little one.

Skill and heart in the theater. Dr. Brian Agaba, an ENT Dr. Tommy Wobudubire, a Pediatric Surgery Fellow, performs a herniotomy on a 4-year-old boy, assisted by General Surgery Resident Dr. Ruth. It’s inspiring to see specialized expertise and mentorship coming together to transform lives in Karamoja!

Skill and heart in the theater. Dr. Brian Agaba, an ENT Dr. Tommy Wobudubire, a Pediatric Surgery Fellow, performs a herniotomy on a 4-year-old boy, assisted by General Surgery Resident Dr. Ruth. It’s inspiring to see specialized expertise and mentorship coming together to transform lives in Karamoja!

A smile is the universal welcome. Every child deserves a chance to smile. The reconstruction team just completed a cleft lip repair on a 3-month-old baby born with a congenital cleft lip and palate. Thanks to the expertise of Dr. Martin Tungotyo and Dr. Timothy Mujyanama, this little one has a brand-new start in life

Vice Chancellor Prof. Pauline Byakika-Kibwika

A Message from the Vice Chancellor Prof. Pauline Byakika-Kibwika

To: Dr. Felix Oyania, Head of Department, Surgery, and the Entire Surgical Team. I wish to express my profound pride and gratitude for the exceptional work you have accomplished during the Paediatric Surgical Camp in Karamoja.

By leading this mission and collaborating so effectively with the Ministry of Health and our esteemed international partners including Bethany Kids, Amigos Internacionales, and others you have moved our university's mission from the lecture room to the heart of the community. Your dedication to serving humanity in one of the most underserved regions of our country exemplifies the spirit of Mbarara University of Science and Technology.

To Dr. Oyania and the entire team: your selflessness in restoring dignity to these children and your commitment to mentoring the next generation of surgeons are truly commendable. You have not only saved lives but also strengthened the fabric of our nation's healthcare.

I am immensely proud of you. Thank you for making “Succeed we MUST” a reality through your service to humanity.

## Author

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Angella Nakato Muyingo
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